

EASTER'S INFLUENCE IN THE PLANT WORLD



CHRISTMAS has its established regalia of holly and mistletoe and the Fourth of July its paraphernalia of national colors and fireworks, so Easter, too, always greets us in traditional costume. She has chosen to appear in the springtime burst of blossom, and without her radiant drapery we would hardly recognize her. Not only do the garden terraces bloom at her approach, but all untitled nature smiles and adorns itself in manifold hues treasured from Iris' last kiss. The landscape is changed under the flood of new aspiration and man is enticed to go forth and become acquainted anew with "our sisters, the flowers," as dear old Francis of Assisi called them.

Out with the flowers, as we know and enjoy them, we think of them by individual names, for our minds seem to demand a specializing title for each thing we encounter, whether it be picture of song, story or natural object. When we consider the names of flowers in their historical development, we are brought face to face with the fact that Easter really changed the nomenclature of our floral world.

Before Christianity swept over Europe, the plants were named for the pagan deities. We have to-day a reminiscence of this entailing in Venus' Fly-trap and Jupiter's Beard. With the ascendancy of our faith, the vegetable kingdom had to be rechristened, just as the human converts were.

The Saviour Himself had few plants named for Him, perhaps from a feeling of reverence. We have, however, Christ's Thorn, which is supposed to have supplied the material for the Crown. His mother was much honored. All blossoms with "Virgin" prefixed, as Virgin's Bower, were named for her, and those, too, that have "Maiden," as Maiden's Hair, and any form of "Mary," as Marigold. Each flower that reaches us to-day with "Lady" in its title was originally "Our Lady," as "Our Lady's Slipper" and "Our Lady's Tresses." In those early days of Christianity many of the saints were paid respect in floral terms. As we have swerved to secularism, we have supplanted their claims and have retained only a few, as Saint John's Wort, Saint Peter's Wreath, Saint Andrew's Cross, Saint Joseph's Lily, and Veronica.

Our ancestors were as eager for explanations as we to-day, and not having our advance in science, they interpreted peculiarities of the flowers to suit their own ideas. From the interpretation of plants on the economic side grew the great Doctrine of Signatures that ruled the medical world down to the seventeenth century. This doctrine of signatures explained that "The mercy of God—maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains and the herbs for the use of man, and hath not only stamped upon them a distinct form, but also given them particular signatures, whereby a man may read even in legible characters the use of them." According to this theory, plants bearing red fruit were good for the blood; the barberry, because of its yellow bark, was a cure for jaundice; the trembling grass deterred attacks of ague; the oxalis, having cordate leaves, was a preventive of heart disease; Our Lady's Thistle, with its numerous prickles, mended a stitch in the side; the Solomon's Seal, by certain marks in its root, indicated that it would seal up all wounds, and this root, writes Gerard, the English surgeon of the sixteenth century, "taketh away in one night, or two at the most, any bruise, black or blue spots, gotten by falls or women's willfulness in stumbling upon their husbands' fists." Our English literature abounds in allusions to this doctrine of signatures, as when Milton in



"A HOT CROSS BUN."
—From Life.

of plants that connected the flowers with the foundation of their religion. Our Lady's Thistle merited its name from a legend of the flight of the holy family from Bethlehem. As Mary nursed the Infant by the roadside, a few drops of milk fell on a plant at her feet, and the leaves retain to this generation the vouchers for the story.

Most of the Christian legends explain the plant's behavior during Passion Week. The veronica bears the imprint that Saint Veronica received on her handkerchief when she pressed from out the throng and wiped the perspiration from the Saviour's brow.

The Fritillaria, or Checkered Lily, before the Sacrifice, was pure white with upturned cup. It stood proudly erect during the Suffering, until darkness enshrouded the earth and it saw that all nature but itself was sorrowing. Then it repented. It drooped low its head, donned garments of mourning, and began to weep. Still it grieves, in sombre attire, with bowed head, and still each petal ever sheds a pearly tear.

pine, and the box; but Saint Chrysostom quotes from Isaiah lx:13: "The glory of Lebanon (cedar shal. come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together to beautify the place of my sanctuary.") The Church fathers considered four woods necessary to the Cross to symbolize the four quarters of the globe over which its influence would spread. The traditions of the Cross go even back to the days

AN EASTER GIFT.

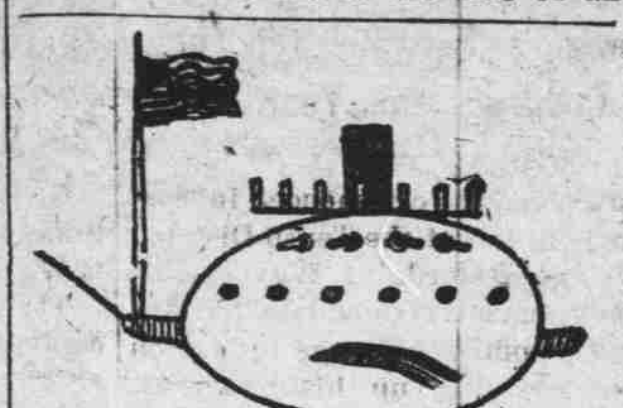


PILLOW DESIGN.

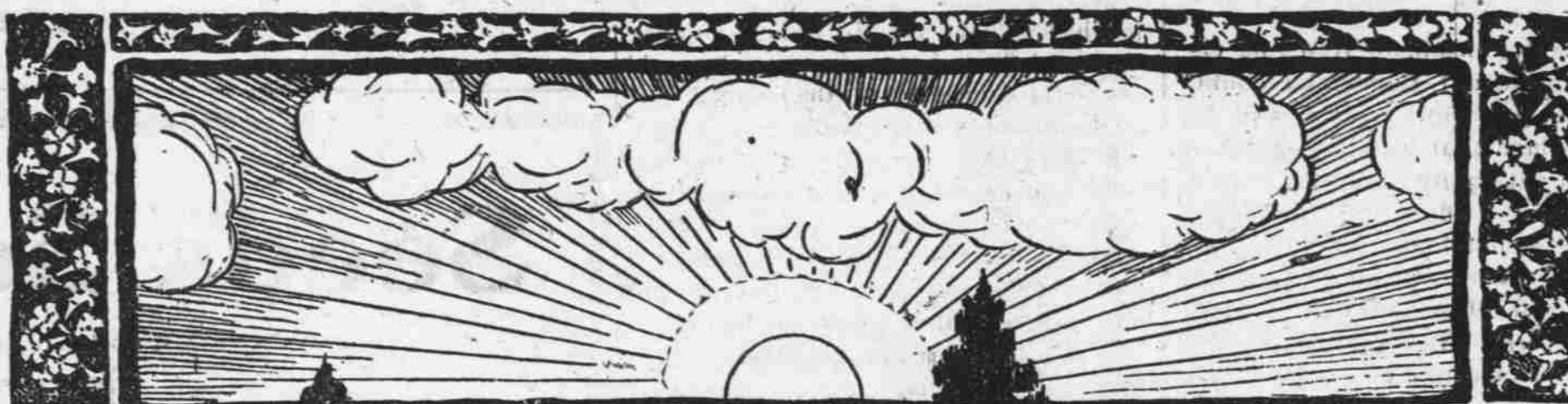
of Adam, and one declares that it was made from apple tree wood; the inference being obvious.

The old legends may seem to us now the relics of a superstitious age, and yet they indicate a stage in our own civilization. They represent the time

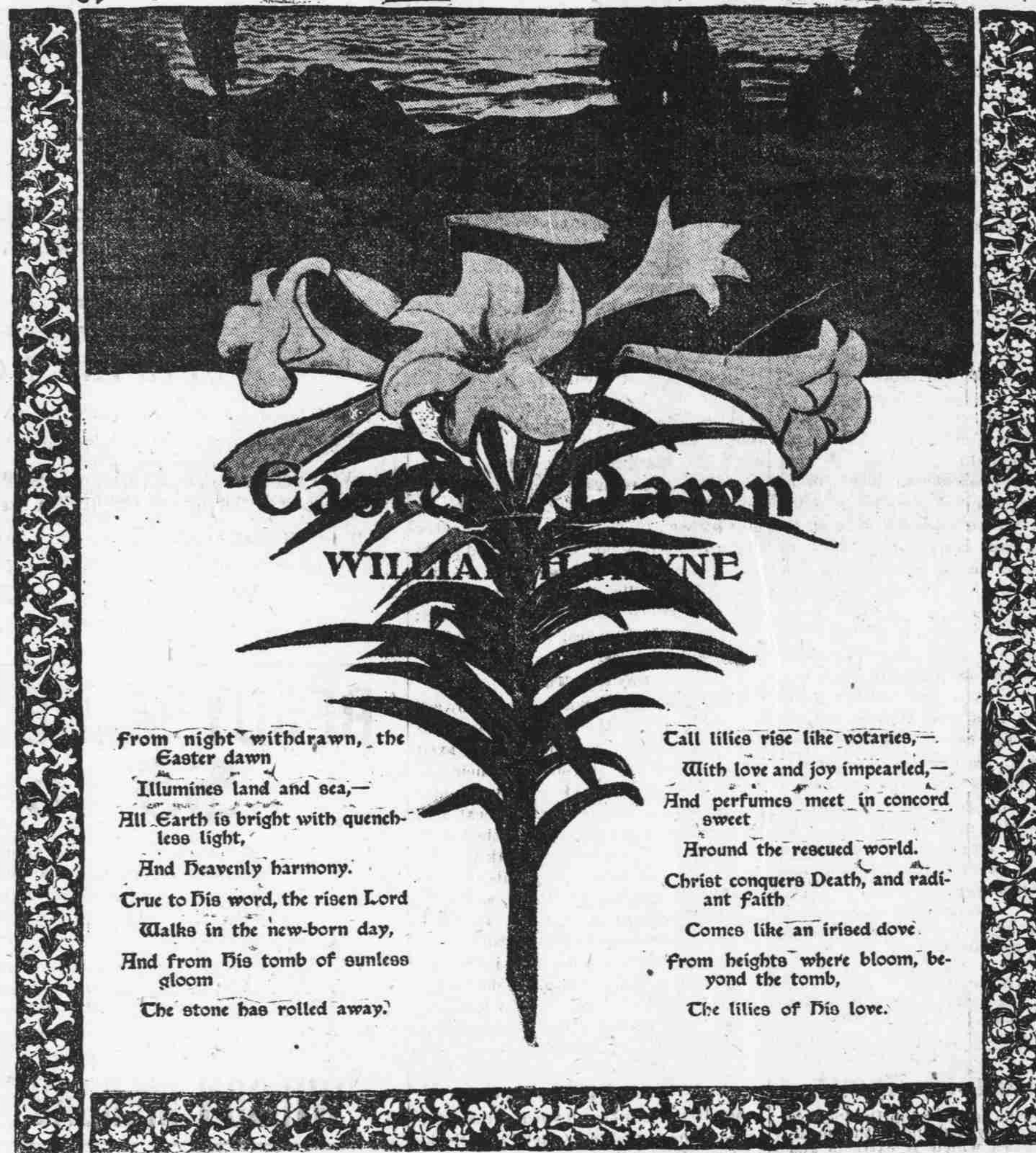
Fun For Easter With Decorated Eggs
The torpedo boat that floats is sure to please. Blow out the contents of an egg by making a pinhole in both ends, and blowing steadily in one. Make a hole in the middle of the side of an



egg and pour in melted sealing wax and lead. Paint a row of portholes around the egg and glue on a bow and a stern cut from a cigar box or a shingle. The smokestack is of black cardboard and the railing of wooden toothpicks, glued in a circle of cardboard which slips over the smokestack



Christ the Lord is Risen to-day



From night withdrawn, the
Easter dawn
Illumines land and sea—
All Earth is bright with quench-
less light,
And Heavenly harmony.
True to His word, the risen Lord
Walks in the new-born day,
And from His tomb of sunless
gloom
The stone has rolled away.

Call lilies rise like votaries,
With love and joy imperaled,
And perfumes meet in concord
sweet
Around the rescued world.
Christ conquers Death, and radi-
ant faith
Comes like an iris'd dove.
From heights where bloom, be-
yond the tomb,
The lilies of His love.

The oxalis, or wood sorrel, was standing at the foot of the Cross and received some drops of the Precious Blood. These she bears even to this day. The Italians have this same legend about the oxalis, which they call "alleluia," to indicate that the little blossom is glorifying God for its great privilege. The scarlet anemone, too, is said to bear the stains of Christ's blood.

The poppy yet carries the memory of the Cross deeply graven in her heart. The banana, too, preserves the Cross in the centre of the fruit. For this reason, the people of the Canary Islands will never cut through a banana as we do; if they ever use a knife to it they slice off lengthwise pieces.

The aspen still shivers with remorse because, when Christ passed it on the way to Calvary, it boldly faced the heavens instead of paying homage as the other trees did. The willow was used for the scourges, and ever since it has bowed its branches in sorrow. The elder is commonly supposed to be the tree upon which Judas hanged himself. It is not to be used even for firewood. However, it is a safe refuge in time of storm, for not even lightning will deign to strike it. A fungus that grows on the elder end is now known as Jew's ear. The cedar, the pine, and the box are all connected with the Crucifixion. Different authorities vary in just what woods did form the Cross. Bebe says the cypress, the cedar, the

when man considered all things of earth made for him and his use. Their peculiar traits or formations must show some connection with his history or imagery. If we have risen to-day to the higher epoch, where we see that each created thing lives for its own development, and not to minister to our needs, it is because of the many more Easters we have experienced since our ancestors' days. Each new Easter, with its floodtide of energy, brings a fresh desire to advance and to consider less selfishly not only the lives of our fellowmen, but also the individuality of "the lilies of the field." —Agnes Comerford, in The Household.

The total stock of money, in gold, silver and uncovered paper in the whole world amounts, in round figures, to \$12,000,000,000.



Young Mrs. Bunny—"Don't recognize him, my son. His conceit has been quite insufferable since he posed for those candy rabbits."—Puck.

and is kept in place with a touch of glue. The American flag flies from a toothpick. If a needle is put into the bow the boat can be drawn through the water by a magnet.



A more peaceable toy is the duck. Weight the shell and paint it to represent a duck. Cut head and tail of pasteboard and after gluing firmly to the shell paint in colors. For the little girl's doll house an eggshell cradle can be made. If the maker is skilled it can be cut in one piece from the egg. Pasteboard rockers are glued on and the cradle can be fitted with tiny mattress, pillow and spread. A penny doll, clad in its nightgown, should repose beneath the covers.

A Chinese Belief.
The Chinese believe that a man, a frog and a hare dwell in the moon, and the last named animal constantly appears in their art and in that of Japan, painted upon the disk of a lunar orb. Nearly all over the world the hare is associated with the moon mythologically, and it is on this account that the rabbit has so much to do with Easter.

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